

Austrian State Treaty

The State Treaty of 15 May 1955, which became effective on 27 July 1955, granted Austria independence and provided for the prompt withdrawal of the troops of the four occupying powers who also guaranteed the sovereignty of the Austrian State (the USSR, the United States, the United Kingdom and France).

An additional undertaking was embodied in the Neutrality Act of October 1955, a statute having the force of a constitutional amendment, which commits Austria to enter into no military alliance and to permit no foreign bases on its territory.

The Austrians claim that since the latter Act was a unilateral measure on their part, they shall be the sole interpreters of their neutrality. They have turned aside the efforts of the Soviet Union, as a treaty guarantor, to interpret Austrian neutrality.

~~The State Treaty prohibits political or economic union between Austrian and Germany and requires the Austrian government to suppress neo-Nazi or pan-German agitation within its territory.~~

~~It denies the armed forces certain types of weapons, particularly~~

~~offer~~ missiles. Vienna has approached the four guarantors for permission to acquire defense missiles, but thus far has failed to obtain Soviet acquiescence. Also included in the Treaty was a provision for the return to Austria of certain assets that the Soviet occupation authorities had seized. In return for these holdings, the Austrians agreed to make substantial reparations payments, chiefly in the form of oil. These payments were completed in December 1963.

The Treaty provides for the calling of a conference of the guarantors in the event of a violation of the treaty's principles. Such a call has never gone out, but Austrian officials have worried that Moscow might take advantage of this provision, particularly at such times when the Soviets have protested "German interference" in Austrian affairs.